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(Proposition.)

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(Climate.)

(White Res. 1825.)

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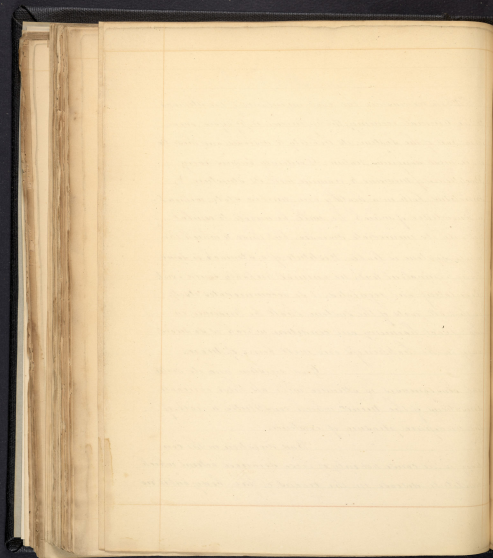
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When we consider the vast importance of the stomach to the animal economy, the influence it exerts over every part of the system, its liability to diseases, and those of the most dangerous nature, it certainly becomes every Practitioner of medicine to examine well its structure & functions, both in a healthy and morbid state, without a knowledge of which he will be unable to combat not only its immediate diseases, but those to which the whole system is liable. Destitute of a stomach is something equivalent to it, no animal probably could exist. Regulating and regulated, it so accommodates itself, as that all parts of the system shall be preserved in that exact harmony and condition which is so necessary to the happiness and well being of man.

Good digestion and its natural consequences is attended with all those agreeable sensations of the mind which constitutes a part of the undefined pleasure of existence.

Bad digestion on the contrary is the cause not only of those disagreeable actions which constitute disease in the organs of the body, but pro-





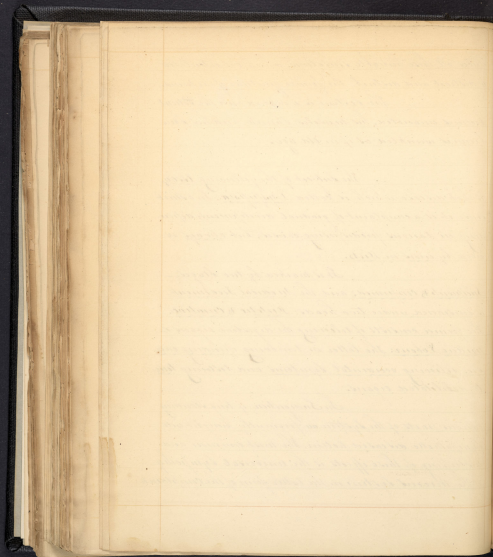
duces all those hostile sensations, which are calculated to distract and disturb the former quietude of the mind.

The system is weakened and the Patient becomes emaciated, his muscles shrink, and his skin becomes wrinkled as if in old age.

The subject of the following essay is that disease which is called Dyspepsia. In strict sense it is a complaint of gradual development depending on various predisposing causes, but always excited by errors in Diets.

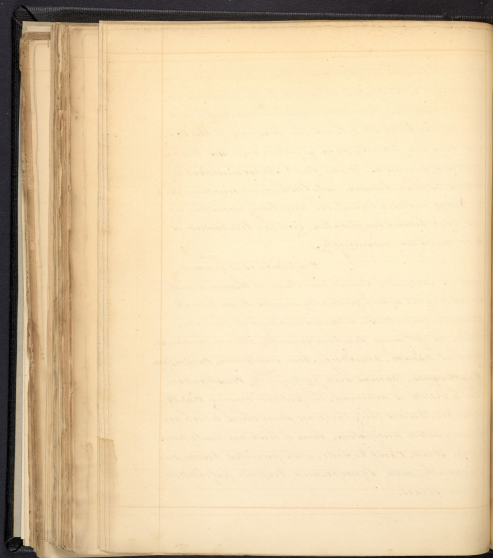
It is marked by two stages, — Insipiens & confirmed; and the Medical Treatment is conducted under two heads: Diætic & Curative. The former consists of relieving the digestive organs of undue Exhaustion. The latter in removing offensive causes, relieving accidental symptoms and restoring tone to debilitated organs.

In Indication of long standing various parts of the system are frequently brought into sympathetic diseased action. The most common and disturbing of these effects is the universal Sympathy of the Nervous System in the latter form of the Complaint.



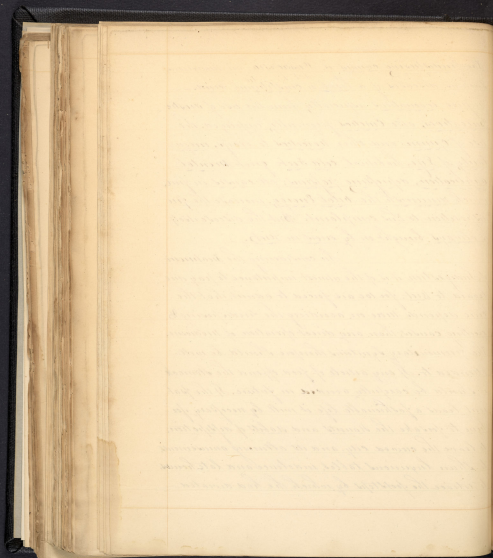
The mind becomes the harbingers of the most awful fore-  
bodings. The Patient is insensible to the pleasures of  
feeling, and his bewildered imagination portrays to  
him in the blackest colours the miseries of death.  
His days are literally days of pain, and his nights  
nights of anguish. When such Supposed medical aff-  
ections as these become established we conclude that  
the Spleen is some one of the auxiliary digestive or-  
gans have become implicated, and the treatment is  
to be modified accordingly.

Dyspepsia as it generally  
presents itself is a chronic complaint of obscure or undi-  
scerned origin, which gradually impairs to our power its  
strength, impatience, and distinctness of character.  
When the following symptoms generally attend the disease.  
Such as Nausea, vomiting, Acid eructations, Cardalgia,  
Gastralgia, Pyrosis, and particularly Constipation.  
The appetite is depressed, the Patient craving Chalk,  
Rhubarb &c. Besides these there are some others, which are  
denominated brumalents, some of these are acute pain  
in the Head, Chest & Side, with purrled Nerve, and  
frequently with Syncope, and violent palpitation  
of the Heart.



The precipitating causes of Dyspepsia are numerous such as diseases of a local or constitutional kind. — prolonged evacuations especially from the use of drastic purgatives, also Cathartics frequently employed, the use of Opium and other Narcotics to excite irregularity of Life, habituall cold &c. great mental application, depressing passions, all causes in fact which diminish the vital Energy, increase the pre disposition to this complaint. But the disease itself is always brought on by event in life.

General Remarks. In considering the treatment of Indigestion it is of the utmost importance to pay due regard to Life: for we are forced to admit, that the cure depends more on avoiding the precipitating & exciting causes, than any direct operation of medicine. The premonitory symptoms therefore should be well attended to. If any article of food offend the Stomach it should be carefully avoided in future. If the patient leads a fashionable life it will be necessary for him to quit the House and habits of dissipation; to leave the crowded city, and its alluring amusements; to shun luxurious tables, indolence and late hours, to retrace the fold steps by which he had deviated —



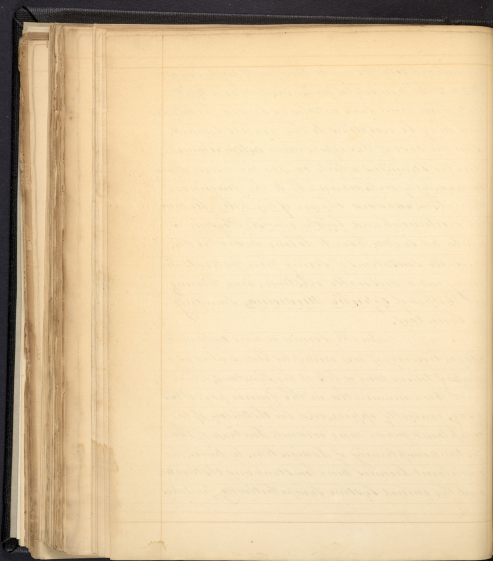
from simple nature, and to omit the country scene, moderate exercise, early rising, simple diet and pleasant recreations. The food should be taken at regular and stated hours, in moderate quantity and without anxiety or interruption. Rough, acrid and irritating articles should be avoided, as difficult of digestion. A diet composed of animal food, milk and stale bread, is the most proper for Dyspepsies. Fresh vegetables, on account of their tendency to ferment are injurious; some however are more so than others. Pears, pears, Cucumbers and Cabbage are the worst. Potatoes, Turnips and Lettuces among the best. A most important object in the treatment, is that of preventing by abstinence, the undue labour of the digestive organs. By diminishing the quantity of food usually taken, and abstracting all unnecessary stimulus, we give comparative rest to the stomach, and time is allowed for the restoration in a great measure, of its healthy action. In the contrary, by resorting to aromatics, tonics and stimulants, in the incipient stage, the stomach from too stimulation is thrown into a feverish and excessive action, which is followed by tripes and



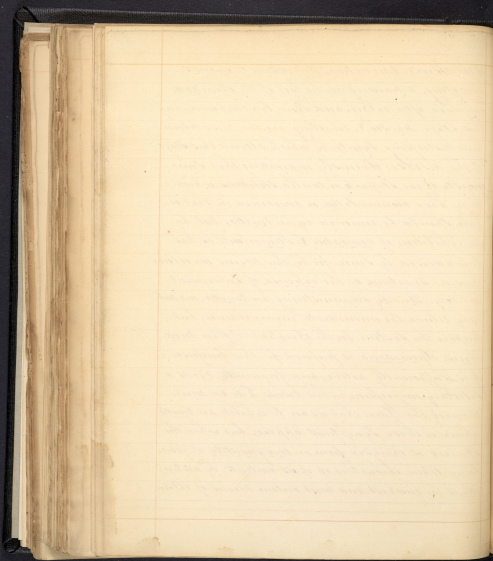


indirect debility. We ought therefore to enjoin on our Patients the necessity of an immediate and total abstinence from such articles as caused the disease. There may be exceptions to this general remark, as in the case of Nymphomania from intemperance. Here the stimulus which caused the disease should be gradually withdrawn. As to the foregoing observations, a sudden change of air, agreeable mental excitement and bodily exercise; Physicians would not so often have to labour under the disagreeable sensations of seeing their patients lingering out a miserable existence, and hearing the epithet of *Cypripedia Medicina*, sounding in their ears.

In the second or more confirmed stage, recovery, if ever accomplished is always a work of time. More or less of the symptoms which have been enumerated in the former part of this essay, generally appear, and the obstinacy of the complaint made more evident. Instead of the patient complaining of Sudication, by times, the complaint becomes more constant and obstinate, and the general system sympathetically partakes

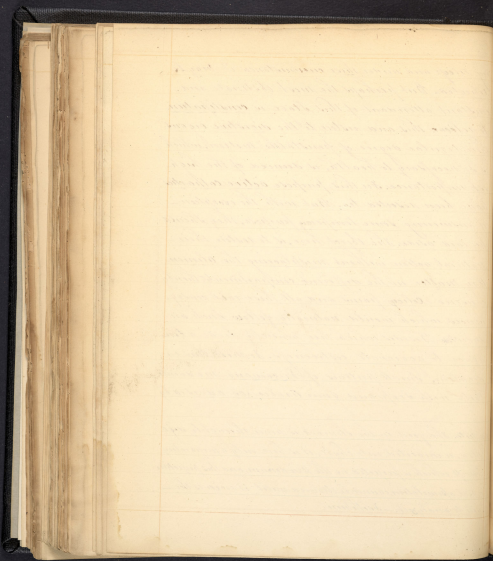


of the disease. Eructation, Regurgitation of spirits, vomiting, a rawing at the pit of the stomach, increased after eating, and slow bowels, accompany this stage. Nausea & vomiting are the most frequent and distressing symptoms which attend this stage of the disease; obviously, indicating that some impurities of the stomach or morbid secretions which may have accumulated or remained in that organ, should be removed by an Emetic. Not by the exhibition of Aromatic & Stimulants, as has been advised by some, for by this means we relieve present symptoms, at the expense of subsequent activity. But by administering an Emetic, we not only relieve the immediate inconvenience, but prepare the system for the operation of other medicines. Ipecacuanha is preferred for this purpose, it is sufficiently active, and frequently exerts a salutary impression on this viscus. I do not mean to convey the Idea, that we are to exhibit an emetic whenever these symptoms appear; but when the stomach is oppressed from an over quantity of food, being taken, evacuating it of its contents, by an emetic, is the quickest and most certain means of obtaining



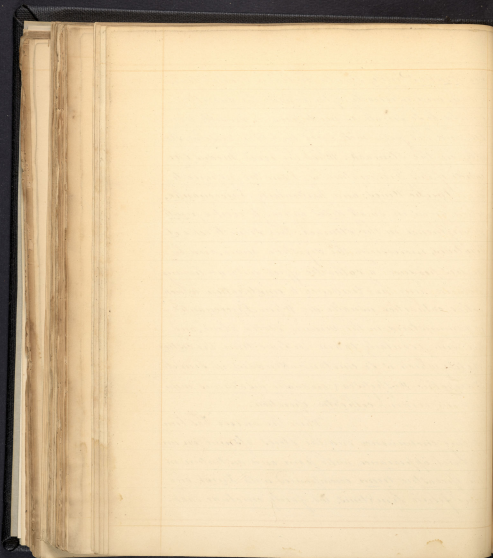
ing relief; and under these circumstances it may be  
suspected. But perhaps the most obstinate and  
constant attendant of this stage is constipation.  
To relieve this and restore to the digestive organs  
their regular degree of peristaltic motion, which  
is so necessary to health, is deemed of the high-  
est importance. For this purpose active cathartics  
have been resorted to. But with the exception  
of answering some temporary purpose, they should  
be laid aside. The object here, is to restore their  
natural action without displacing the elemen-  
tary matter in the different compartments thereby  
causing Colic, jaundice and all those evil conse-  
quences which would naturally follow such an  
error. Decides which they generally have a ten-  
dency to aggravate constipation. To meet this in-  
dication, Small portions of Spicae made into  
pills with Soap and Gum Arabic as advised by

\* Note. The food in the stomach is never thoroughly dig-  
ested, & converted into chyle, it is here only a preparatory  
process which is perfected in the Duodenum, and this perfection  
and assimilation cannot be obtained until it reaches the  
bile to analyze it. — See above.



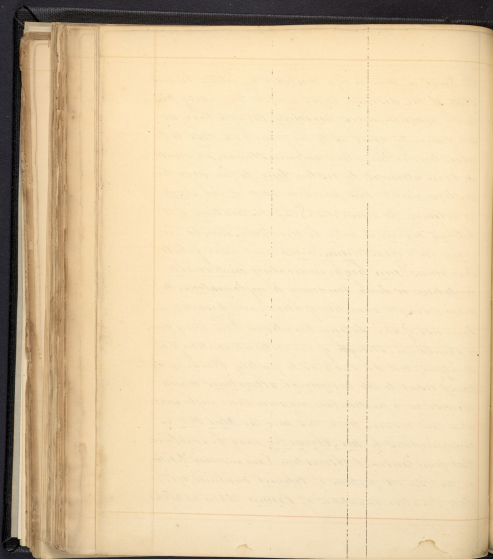
The Written Prescription should be taken several times a day, and especially after eating: the quantity should be so divided as not to produce unpleasant and the pills will drive that they dissolve slowly in the stomach. What the exact modus operandi of this prescription is, I am not prepared to say. Emetic Drugs, and particularly Succroanthe, when given in small doses appear to exert a powerful influence in the stomach. They seem to exert a stimulating increasing the digestive power, and by degrees produce a cathartic effect without leaving behind them that tendency to constipation, which active cathartics usually do. When Succroanthe is administered in the manner stated above, and the pills regularly taken for some time, the active activity which is so constant attendant in simple Scleripathia Waspipathia gradually disappears with out any evident cathartic operation.

When the disease has been of long continuance, and the stools assume an unnatural appearance, with pain and distention in the operation region, accompanied with direct and other febrile symptoms, we fairly conclude that

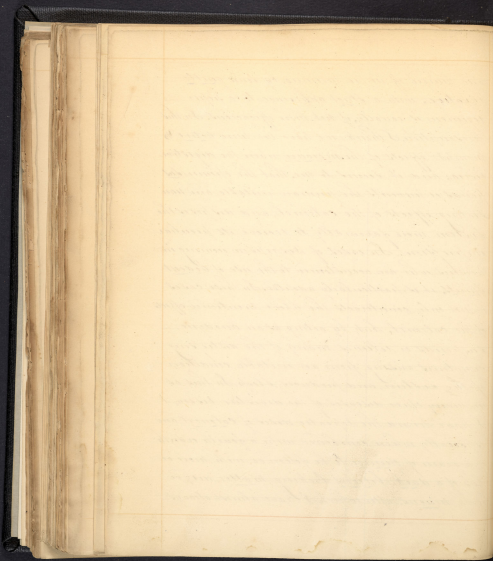




The Spleen it may be very morbidly affected. In this state of the disease, most writers have very properly recommended Mercury; though they do not generally agree as to the form and dose to be used. Under the above circumstances, we would in vain attempt to restore tone to the digestive system, until this morbid state of the Spleen be relieved. To accomplish the restoration of the biliary organ, it may be necessary, should the pain in the epigastrium, heart, and other febrile symptoms turn high, indicating considerable irritation or some tendency to inflammation to draw a small quantity of blood, and prescribe some use of the Saline laxatives. This being done, if the strength of the patient, absence of symptoms, not be such as to justify bleeding, we must resort to the mercurial alteratives, which exercise in a particular manner their influence upon that organ. With this view the Blue Pill as recommended by Mrs. Ashmead may be employed. But from personal observation I am induced to believe, that small portions of colony combined with still smaller quantities of Opium taken at night

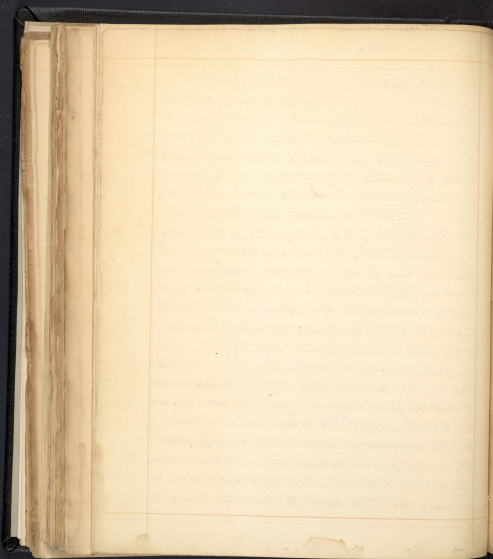


and joined off in the morning, by some gentle  
laxative, with a strict adherence to a regu-  
lar regimen is equally, if not more efficacious. In the  
prescription, I think, we have the more active &  
prompt effects of the mercury when the digestive  
viscera, and it seems to me, that the opium, that  
period is prevents the primary, inevitable and nec-  
essary effects of the calomel, and disposes the  
system more favourably to receive its peculiar  
impression. In cases of Dyspepsia running in  
paroxysms who are accustomed to the use of acrid  
spirits, it is particularly adapted. In these cases  
it not only counteracts the above mentioned effects  
of the calomel, but by acting as an anodyne  
suspends or relieves many of the antipathetic  
symptoms arising from an irritable condition  
of the system, and produces sleep. In this as  
in many other instances of the digestive viscera,  
I have found the repeated doses of calomel and  
especially when combined with a fourth or sixth  
of a grain of opium to be followed with more or  
less of a dark bilious looking matter mixed  
with mucus, after which I have almost always



found the patient much relieved.

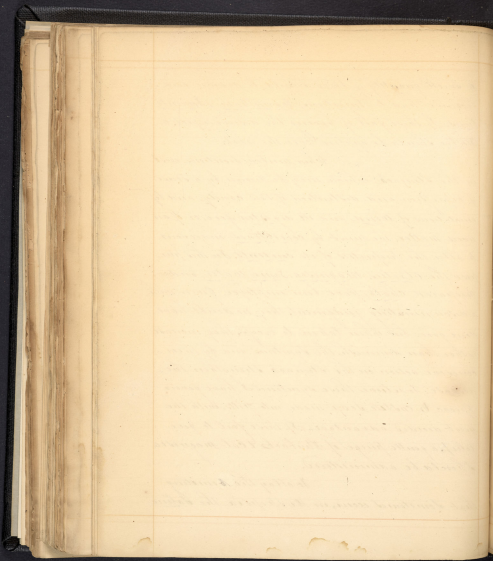
One of the most prominent indications in the treatment of Indigestion, is to relieve those accidental symptoms which may arise from undigested food in the alimentary canal. Called to a patient labouring under cholera from undigested food in the stomach or bowels, our first inquiry should be, to ascertain of what kind, and how long the food had been taken. If the interval from the time the food was taken, until the first symptoms of cholera appeared, be short, we may conclude that the cause is in the stomach, and that by evacuating it by an Emetic the immediate inconvenience may be removed; but on the contrary, if the interval has been long, and the pain confined principally to the lower part of the abdomen, we may conclude with as much certainty, that the food has passed from the stomach into the bowels, and that to relieve them of their morbid contents we must resort to cathartics. But owing to the long continued irritation producing spasms, cathartics alone will not operate to overcome them, if the pulse be hard and quick -



a small quantity of blood should be drawn, and  
recourse had to Syringes, Warm Bath & Stimula-  
tion. If these fail of having the desired effect, a  
Blisters should be applied over the part.

When morbid secretions exist  
in the Stomach, which may be known by a sense  
of oppression and distention of this cavity, and by  
evacuations of Wind, and ill digested food, or of an  
acid matter, we must by correctives endeavour  
to alter the properties of its contents. In this pur-  
pose the Alcalies, Magnesia, Some water and  
prepared chalk, have been employed. Given with  
a discriminating judgment, they no doubt have  
done good: but when taken to excess, they increase  
rather than diminish the symptoms and by their  
concrete action on the Stomach strengthen the  
disease. To relieve these symptoms I have given  
Spice & cold tea, Scops made into pills, with the  
most decided advantage. If these fail to give  
relief, a gentle purge of Rhubarb & Cal. Magnesia  
should be administered.

To allay the vomiting  
that sometimes occurs, in Nystrophia the Saliva

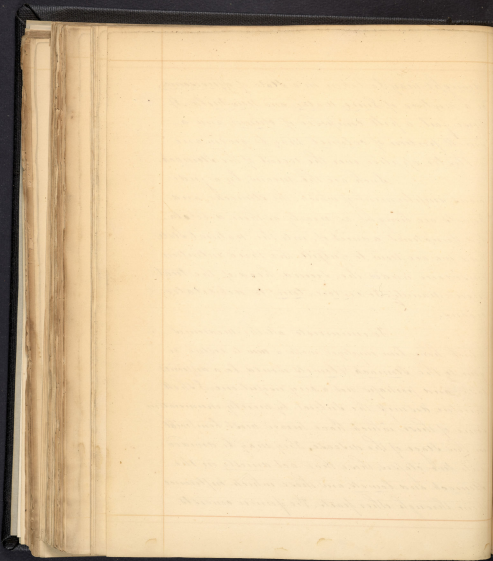




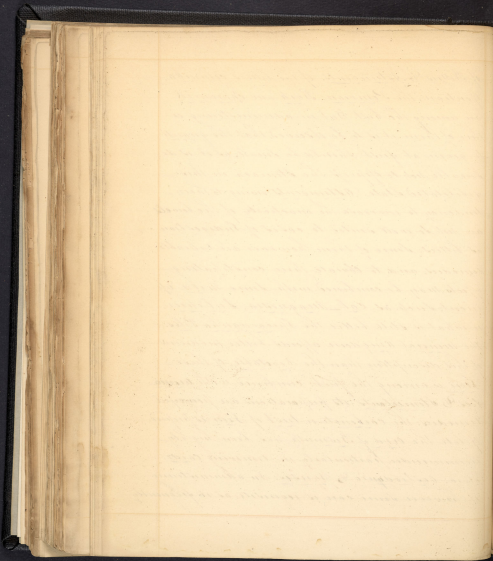
drought may be taken in a state of effluence, or a mixture of Lime water and New Milk. If these fail, a pill composed of opium and a small portion of calomel may be given and a blister applied over the region of the stomach.

Such are the means, by a judicious employment of which, the stomach, and bowels are brought as nearly as their debilitated functions admit of, into the natural state, and we are now to fulfill the third intention considered under the second head of the treatment, namely, To restore tone to debilitated organs.

To enumerate all the medicines which have been employed with a view to restore vigour to the stomach & bowels would be a difficult task, and perhaps not a very useful one. I shall therefore dismiss the subject by merely enumerating some of those which have proved most beneficial in this stage of the disease. They may be divided into two classes, those that act directly on the stomach and bowels, and those which influence them through other parts. The former consists



of Bellary's Antimony, of the lithers columba,  
Gentian, the Peruvian Bark and Camomile,  
are among the best. But in administering ei-  
ther of them, it is to be observed, that the quantity  
to given at first, should be small, as it is so  
liable not to offend the stomach, in this  
debilitated state. Ostingents owing to their  
tendency to increase the insensibility of the bowels  
are not so well suited to cases of Indigestion  
as bitters. Some of them however are valuable  
remedies, and to obviate their constipating-  
effects may be combined with some Mild Op-  
erients, such as Col-Magnesia, Sulphur,  
or what is still better the Spermacua Pills.  
The Mineral Kingdom affords better medicines  
of this description than the Vegetable, of these -  
Ser is among the first: combined with Aroma-  
tics & Stimulants its preparations are powerful  
remedies: the Carbonate or Salt of Ser is prepared  
of late the Urea of Bismuth has been highly  
recommended, particularly in removing cardi-  
algia, Gastralgia & Dyspepsia: In administering  
it however some care is requisite, as it frequently



when given in large doses, produces local effects. Where there is much sweating, indicating relaxation, the Sulphuric Acid may be used with advantage. With respect to those medicines or medicines which act sympathetically on the elementary canal, the most powerful and the only ones I shall mention are those that make their impression on the Skin. Where there is considerable strength remaining, and the heat not below the natural standard, the cold Bath sometimes proves very beneficial, especially when followed by friction with a coarse towel or flesh brush. Where the cold Bath is inadvisable the Warm Bath with a handful or two of common salt dissolved in it may be employed.

